

for certaynly, this wot I wel, he seyde,
That foresight of divyne purveyaunce
Hath seyn alwey me to forgon Criseyde,
Sin God seeth every thing, out of doutaunce,
And hem desponeth, thourgh his ordonaunce,
In hir merytes sothly for to be,
As they shul comen by predestinee.

But natheles, alas! whom shal I leve?
for ther ben grete clerkes many oon,
That destinee thourgh argumentes preve;
And som men seyn that nedely ther is noon;
But that free chois is yeven us everichoon.
O, welaway! so slewe am clerkes olde,
That I not whos opinion I may holde.

for som men seyn, if God seth al biforn,
Ne God may not deceyved ben, pardee,
Chan moot it fallen, though men hadde it sworn,
That purveyaunce hath seyn bifore to be.
Wherfor I seye, that from eterne if he
Hath wist biforn our thought eek as our dede,
We have no free chois, as these clerkes rede.

for other thought nor other dede also
Might never be, but swich as purveyaunce,
Which may not ben deceyved nevermo,
Hath feled biforn, withouten ignoraunce.
for if ther mighte been a variaunce
To wrythen out fro Goddes purveyinge,
There nere no prescience of thing cominge;

But it were rather an opinioun
Uncerteyn, and no stedfast forseinge;
And certes, that were an abusioun,
That God shuld han no parfit cleer witinge
More than we men that han doutous weninge.
But swich an errour upon God to gesse
Were fals and foul, and wikked corsednesse.

Eek this is an opinioun of somme
That han hir top ful heighe and smothe yshore;
They seyn right thus, that thing is not to come
for that the prescience hath seyn bifore
That it shal come; but they seyn, that therfore
That it shal come, therefore the purveyaunce
Wot it biforn withouten ignoraunce;

And in this manere this necessitee
Retorneth in his part contrarie agayn.
for needfully bihoveth it not to be
That thilke thinges fallen in certayn
That ben purveyed; but nedely, as they seyn,
Bihoveth it that thinges, whiche that falle,
That they in certayn ben purveyed alle.

I mene as though I laboured me in this,
To enqueren which thing cause of which thing be;
As whether that the prescience of God is
The certayn cause of the necessitee
Of thinges that to comen been, pardee;
Or if necessitee of thing cominge
Be cause certeyn of the purveyinge.

But now ne enforce I me nat in shewing
How the ordre of causes stant; but wel wot I,
That it bihoveth that the bifallinge
Of thinges wist bifore certeynly
Be necessarie, al seme it not therby
That prescience put fallinge necessaire
To thing to come, al faille it foule or faire.

for if ther sit a man yond on a see,
Than by necessitee bihoveth it
That, certes, thyn opinioun soth be,
That wenest or conjectest that he sit;
And fertherover now ayenward yit,
Lo, right so it is of the part contrarie,
As thus; now herkne, for I wol not tarie:

I seye, that if the opinioun of thee
Be sooth, for that he sit, than seye I this,
That he mot sitten by necessitee;
And thus necessitee in either is,
for in him nede of sitting is, ywis,
And in thee nede of sooth; and thus, forsothe,
Ther moot necessitee ben in yow bothe.

But thou mayst seyn, the man sit not therfore,
That thyn opinion of sitting soth is;
But rather, for the man sit ther bifore,
Therefore is thyn opinion sooth, ywis,
And I seye, though the cause of sooth of this
Comth of his sitting, yet necessitee
Is entrechaunged, bothe in him and thee.

Thus on this same wyse, out of doutaunce,
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
My resoninge of Goddes purveyaunce,
And of the thinges that to comen be;
By whiche reson men may wel ysee,
That thilke thinges that in erthe falle,
That by necessitee they comen alle.

for although that, for thing shal come, ywis,
Therefore is it purveyed, certaynly,
Nat that it comth for it purveyed is:
Yet natheles, bihoveth it nedfully,
That thing to come be purveyed, trewely;
Or elles, thinges that purveyed be,
That they bityden by necessitee.

And this suffyseth right ynow, certeyn,
for to destroye our free chois every del.
But now is this abusion to seyn,
That fallinge of the thinges temporel
Is cause of Goddes prescience eternel.
Now trewely, that is a fals sentence,
That thing to come sholde cause his prescience.

What mighte I wene, and I hadde swich a thought,
But that God purveyth thing that is to come
for that it is to come, and elles nought?
So mighte I wene that thinges alle and some,
That whylom been bifalle and overcome,
Ben cause of thilke sovereyn purveyaunce,
That forwot al withouten ignoraunce.

And over al this, yet seye I more herto,
That right as whan I woot ther is a thing,
Ywis, that thing mot nedefully be so;
Eek right so, whan I woot a thing coming,
So mot it come; and thus the bifallinge
Of thinges that ben wist bifore the tyde,
They mowe not been eschewed on no syde.

Chan seyde he thus: Almighty Jove in trone,
That wost of al this thing the soothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorwe, or do me deye sone,
Or bring Criseyde and me fro this distresse.
And whyl he was in al this hevynesse,
Disputinge with himself in this matere,
Com Pandare in, and seyde as ye may here.

O mighty God, quod Pandarus, in trone,
Eyl who seigh ever a wys man faren so?
Why, Troilus, what thenkestow to done?
Hastow swich lust to been thyn owene fo?
What, parde, yet is not Criseyde ago!
Why lust thee so thyself fordoon for drede,
That in thyn heed thyn eyen semen dede?

Hastow not lived many a yeer biforn
Withouten hir, and ferd ful wel at ese?
Artow for hir and for non other born?
Hath kinde thee wroughte alonly hir to plesse?
Lat be, and thenk right thus in thy disese,
That, in the dees right as ther fallen chaunces,
Right so in love, ther come and goon plesaunces.

And yet this is a wonder most of alle,
Why thou thus sorwest, sin thou nost not yit,
Touching hir goinge, how that it shal falle,
Ne if she can hirself disturben it.
Thou hast not yet assayed al hir wit.
A man may al by tyme his nekke bede
Whan it shal of, and sorwen at the nede.

forthy take hede of that that I shal seye;
I have with hir yspoke and longe ybe,
So as accorded was bitwixe us tweye.
And evermo me thinketh thus, that she
Hath somewhat in hir hertes prevetee,
Wherwith she can, if I shal right arede,
Disturbe al this, of which thou art in drede.

for which my counseil is, whan it is night,
Thou to hir go, and make of this an ende;
And blisful Juno, thourgh hir grete mighte,
Shal, as I hope, hir grace unto us sende.
Myn herte seyth, Certeyn, she shal not wende,
And forthy put thyn herte a while in reste;
And hold this purpos, for it is the beste.

This Troilus answerde, and sighte sore:
Thou seyst right wel, and I wil do right so;
And what him liste, he seyde unto it more.
And whan that it was tyme for to go,
fulprevly himself, withouten mo,
Unto hir com, as he was wont to done;
And how they wroughte, I shal yow telle sone.
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Soth is, that whan they gonne first to mete,
So gan the peyne hir hertes for to twiste,
That neither of hem other mighte grete,
But hem in armes toke and after kiste.
The lasse wofulle of hem bothe niste
Wher that he was, ne mighte o word outbringe,
As I seyde erst, for wo and for sobbinge.

Tho woful teres that they leten falle
As bittre weren, out of teres kinde,
for peyne, as is ligne aloes or galle.
So bittre teres weep nought, as I finde,
The woful Myrra through the bark and rinde.
That in this world ther nis so hard an herte,
That nolde han rewed on hir peynes smerte.

But whan hir woful wery gostes tweyne
Retorned been theras hem oughte dwelle,
And that somewhat to wayken gan the peyne
By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the welle
Of hire teres, and the herte unswelle,
With broken voys, al hoors forabright, Criseyde
To Troilus these ilke wordes seyde:

O Jove, I deye, and mercy I beseeche!
Help, Troilus! and therewithal hir face
Upon his brest she leyde, and loste speche;
Hir woful spirit from his propre place,
Right with the word, alwey up poynt to pace.
And thus she lyth with hewes pale and grene,
That whylom fresh and fairest was to sene.

This Troilus, that on hir gan biholde,
Clepinge hir name, and she lay as for deed,
Withoute answer, and felte hir limes colde,
Hir eyen throwen upward to hir heed,
This sorwful man can now noon other reed,
But ofte tyme hir colde mouth he kiste;
Wher him was wo, God and himself it wiste!

He rist him up, and long streight he hir leyde;
for signe of lyf, for ought he can or may,
Can he noon finde in nothing on Criseyde,
for which his song ful ofte is Weylaway!
But whan he saugh that specheles she lay,
With sorwful voys, and herte of blisse al bare,
He seyde how she was fro this world yfare!

So after that he longe hadde hir compleyned,
His hondes wronge, and seyde that was to seye,
And with his teres salte hir brest bireyned,
He gan tho teris wypen of ful dreye,
And pitously gan for the soule preye,
And seyde: O Lord, that set art in thy trone,
Rewe eek on me, for I shal folwe hir sone!

She cold was and withouten sentement,
for aught he woot, for breeth ne felte he noon;
And this was him a preignant argument
That she was forth out of this world agoon;
And whan he seigh ther was non other woon,
He gan hir limes dresse in swich manere
As men don hem that shul be leyd on bere.